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Review of the achievements in the implementation and results of the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s

Renewal of commitment and future action for children in the next decade

Letter dated 12 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request that the attached report, which includes the outcome of five main regional processes held in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly on children, be circulated as a document of the special session.

(*Signed*) M. Patricia **Durrant**
Ambassador/Permanent Representative
Chairperson of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session
of the United Nations General Assembly on Children

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Annex to the letter dated 12 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Outcome of regional processes in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly on children

Summary

The following report presents the outcomes of five main regional processes tnat have taken place in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly on children:

- *The African Common Position as Africa's contribution to the special session of the General Assembly on children: Declaration* (Pan-African Forum on the Future of Children, Africa Fit for Children, Egypt, 28-31 May 2001);
- *Kathmandu Understanding: Investing in Children in South Asia* (South Asia High-level Meeting on Investing in Children, Nepal, 22-23 May 2001);
- *The Berlin Commitment for Children of Europe and Central Asia* (Berlin Conference — Children in Europe and Central Asia, Germany, 16-18 May 2001);
- *Beijing Declaration on Commitments for Children in the East Asia and Pacific Region for 2001-2010* (Fifth Ministerial Consultation on Shaping the Future of Children, China, 14-16 May 2001);
- *The Kingston Consensus on Children and Social Policy in the Americas* (Fifth Ministerial Meeting on Children and Social Policy in the Americas, Jamaica, 13 October 2000).

The African Common Position as Africa's contribution to the special session of the General Assembly on children: Declaration

Pan-African Forum on the Future of Children, Africa Fit for Children

Egypt, 28-31 May 2001

I. Preamble

1. We, the participants in the Pan-African Forum on the Future of Children, meeting in Cairo, Egypt from 28-31 May 2001, within the framework of OAU Council of Ministers decision CM/Dec. 542 (LXXII) endorsed by the 36th Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU); mandating the OAU Secretariat to develop an African Common Position, in consultation with relevant International and African institutions as well as the civil society organizations to be tabled before the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children in September 2001.

2. We acknowledge and affirm that it is the responsibility of African governments, citizens, families, civil society, regional and sub-regional organizations and the international community to ensure that children in Africa realize their full range of rights.

3. We are cognizant of the various OAU and non OAU declarations, decisions and recommendations relating to children, in particular:

- The Bamako Initiative on Child Survival, Development and Universal Immunization in Africa, and on the Programme of Essential Medicines for Children and their Mothers, 1989;
- The Consensus of Dakar, 1992;
- Declaration AHG/Decl. 1 (XXX) on AIDS and the Child in Africa, 1994;
- The Tunis Declaration on the Follow-up of the Mid-Decade Goals for the Child, 1995;
- Resolution AHG/Res.251 (XXXII) declaring the period 1997 to 2006 Decade of Education in Africa, 1996;
- The Common Position and Plan of Action and Strategies to support HIV/AIDS Orphans, Vulnerable Children and Children infected by HIV/AIDS, 2000;
- Conference of Parliamentarians from Maghreb and West and Central Africa for the "Global Movement for Children";
- The Abuja Declaration and Plan of Action on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases, April 2001;
- Bamako Declaration "Vision 2010" on Reduction of Maternal and Neo-Natal Mortality, May 2001;
- The Kigali Declaration on Children and HIV/AIDS Prevention, May 2001;
- Third Summit of African First Ladies for Peace and Humanitarian Issues, Libreville, Gabon, May 2001.

4. More than ten years after the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has been adopted and subsequently come into force, and almost two years after the entry into force of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), we reaffirm our full commitment to the obligations enshrined in these instruments. The challenge is to transform the state obligation, solemnly entered into through the collective act of acceding to these instruments, to the practical realisation of the Rights of the Child in Africa.

5. We strongly believe that the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child provide the basis for action in favour of children. All the rights contained therein are indivisible and must equally be respected and realised.

II. Basic Principles

6. The challenge now is to reaffirm our commitment to ensure that the goals of today are met. We recognise that the future of Africa lies with the well being of its children and youth. The prospect for the socio-economic transformation of the continent rests with investing in the young people of the continent. **Today's investment in children is tomorrow's peace, stability, security, democracy and sustainable development.** We acknowledge that African children and youth represent more than half of the continent's population. But their views have not been sought concerning the pressing social, economic and human rights issues that directly affect them. **Africa's young voices must not be ignored; they must be heard.**

7. We affirm that responding to the needs of Africa's children is an imperative. Children should be the core of priorities for policy makers. **Africa's children are indispensable actors for the present and future of our continent.**

8. We note that Africa's children in many ways are the most disadvantaged in the world. Their lives are often too short and their life-chances are too limited. They are exposed to violence and HIV/AIDS infection; they are deprived of education; they are vulnerable to malnutrition and disease. The special needs and demands of Africa's children and youth require focused attention now and in the coming years. **Africa's children need full support and commitment and they need it now.**

9. We note further that Africa's youth are facing a future affected by violence and poverty, and all-too-often foreshortened by HIV/AIDS, malaria and other pandemics. We also note that natural and man-made disasters as well as negative impact of external debt servicing, globalisation and trade liberalization have added to the plight of Africa's children. Youth has been overlooked in national and international action and policymaking, and the links between children and youth have been too long neglected. But the energy and commitment of youth represent a formidable force for positive change. They will determine which direction Africa takes in the coming decades. **The children and the youth are our greatest untapped resource.**

10. We reaffirm that children have a right to enjoy a healthy environment for the realization of their physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Equally they have a duty to participate in activities that rehabilitate or protect the environment.

11. We are deeply concerned that Africa continues to be plagued by war and armed conflicts which have an enormous and disproportionate negative impact on the civilian population, particularly children and women, a situation in which the human rights of children can never be fully realized.

12. We reaffirm Africa's commitment to peaceful co-existence and the settlement of disputes through negotiations, dialogue and reconciliation as an essential condition for the creation of a child and youth friendly and conducive environment for the protection, survival, growth and development of children and youth.

13. We admit that although some progress has been achieved, the record of the last eleven years is still unsatisfactory. Overall, Africa's children have lost another decade, and with the foreseen but unprevented tragedy of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, Africa stands in danger of losing a generation. This record compels us to recognise our neglect of basic obligations, and challenges us to adopt alternative paradigms for tomorrow. We cannot afford to give up on another decade of African children and youth. **Africa's children need to enjoy their rights to health, education and training now. At the same time, they must assume their responsibilities.**

14. We submit that the special needs of Africa's children have to date not been adequately reflected in international policies and programmes. Africa's children and youth need and demand a special place in the forthcoming United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children. This Forum is intended to articulate those special needs: its recommendations must be specific and relevant to Africa. **The concerns of children and youth in Africa must be at the centre of the global agenda.**

15. We stress that responsibility for realising the Rights of the Child falls at all levels, children, youth, on families, on communities, on civil society, on the private sector, on national governments, on subregional and regional organisations, and on the international community. **The agenda of 'Africa Fit for Children' must ignite real commitment, sustained resolve and concrete action.**

16. More than ten years after the historic World Summit on Children, and the adoption of the World Declaration and Plan of Action that set specific goals for child rights and welfare to be met by 2000, we are in a position to evaluate progress. Much has been achieved, but many promises and aspirations remain to be met. Some of the shortcomings have arisen from external factors, while others are our own responsibility.

17. We reaffirm the principle of the universality of the rights of children within the framework of positive cultural diversity.

III. 'Africa Fit for Children': The Way Forward

18. In light of the above, we solemnly urge Heads of State and Government to reaffirm their previous commitment to African children and solemnly commit ourselves further to the following:

    (a) A vision for Africa's future;
    (b) Firm commitment to visionary — but realistic and achievable — goals;
    (c) Clear and realistic Plan of Action with workable steps and clear timetables;
    (d) Establishment of a true partnership for joint action between African governments, civil society, youth and children, families and communities and the international community;
    (e) Widespread and meaningful participation of youth and children in the planning, implementation and monitoring of these undertakings;
    (f) Quality leadership practicing transparency and accountability in favour of a rights-based policy in the interest of children and youth.

19. ***We also urge Heads of State and Government to commit themselves to a clear vision for Africa's future.*** Africa's children and youth *are* its present and its future. If Africa is to claim the 21st Century, African countries must invest in Africa's children and youth. It is essential that the provisions of the ACRWC and CRC are treated as state obligations, in the framework of a rights-based approach to child survival and development. There is urgent need to provide a peaceful enabling environment for the achievement of these rights through the establishment of appropriate structures for implementation and monitoring. It is also essential that youth are fully included in these obligations.

20. We request our Governments to put in place a programme that encapsulates the vision of children and youth themselves. The participation of children and youth in setting goals and policies over the last eleven years has

been insufficient for us to be able to accurately reflect the vision of Africa's youth and children in any document written in 2001. We acknowledge that a vision for Africa's future is a continent in which, by 2010, the following objectives will have been achieved:

(a) Young people confidently expect to live longer and healthier lives than their parents, with increased life chances;
(b) African children and youth are able to achieve personal and collective development in a context that reflects their culture;
(c) Young Africans believe, with good reason, that the future of their communities, countries and continent, is in their hands.

21. These points reflect the very important truth that confidence in the future is the foundation for progressive social change. In seeking to build Africa fit for children, we must continue to respect human dignity amid the statistical indicators of progress.

22. ***African countries must commit themselves to realistic and achievable goals***. The goals laid out in the 1990 WSC World Declaration are yet to be achieved along with others subsequently adopted. Today we must recommit ourselves to the following indispensable obligations:

(a) Non-AIDS-related child mortality rates should be reduced to the levels affirmed in the 1990 World Declaration;
(b) Mother-to-child transmission of HIV should be reduced by 25% by 2005;
(c) The incidence of HIV in young people aged 15-24 should be reduced by 25% by 2005;
(d) HIV/AIDS prevention information and services should reach 90% of youths by 2003;
(e) Universal primary education and early childhood care and development in gender and in treatment of children with special needs, should be achieved by 2010 and gender disparities in education should be eliminated;
(f) Exclusive breastfeeding up to six months of age and continued breastfeeding with appropriate complementary feeding up to two years and beyond should be promoted, protected and supported. All countries should implement the Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.
(g) The eradication of poliomyelitis by 2005 should be achieved;
(h) Infant and child mortality due to vaccine-preventable diseases of childhood should be reduced by 50% by 2005;
(i) Ensure implementation of effective family planning programmes;
(j) There should be full protection for children in situations of armed conflict and children under foreign occupation including demobilisation of all combatants aged under 18;
(k) Every child should be immediately protected from violence, neglect, sexual exploitation and trafficking;
(l) Measures including the revision of legal codes and procedures to enable children to give evidence in an appropriate way, the development of child-friendly police sections and courts and the facilitation of social action litigation in favour of children should be underway in all countries by 2010.

23. Fulfilling the above requires a range of actions to mobilise resources, both financial and human. Achieving the goals laid out above will require increased effort and commitment, from a wide range of stakeholders including governments, civil society, the media, the private sector and the international community. All have responsibilities towards Africa's children, to realise the rights enshrined in international instruments. Africa's children deserve as much as children elsewhere in the world.

Kathmandu Understanding: Investing in Children in South Asia

South Asia High-level Meeting on Investing in Children

Nepal, 22-23 May 2001

WE, the delegations of the Governments of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, along with corporate leaders and young activists (Change Makers) from our countries met at the South Asia High-level Meeting on Investing in Children in Kathmandu, Nepal on 22 and 23 May 2001. This meeting was preceded by consultations between Change Makers and corporate leaders. These meetings were organised as part of the Global Movement for Children and in preparation for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session to be held in New York 19-21 September 2001.

WE agree that children are the future of our nations and, therefore, investing in children should be a national priority.

GUIDED by the spirit of the draft outcome document of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children, *A World Fit for Children*, we recognise that each child needs a good start in life; completion of basic education of good quality, and the opportunity for adolescents to develop their individual capacities to the fullest.

WE note the progress made by countries of South Asia towards achieving the goals of the World Summit for Children and the 1996 SAARC Ministerial Conference on Children held in Rawalpindi. We also note examples of large-scale actions taken by governments of South Asia, non-governmental organisations, international agencies, civil society and communities in areas such as early childhood development, universal primary and elementary education, and immunisation. But

WE acknowledge that there is still much to be done to attain most of the goals and to fulfil the rights of all girls and boys to survival, health, development and protection through access to quality basic social services, including health, nutrition, education, and protection against neglect, abuse and exploitation. In particular, we note that birth registration, low-birth weight, infant, under-5 and maternal mortality, malnutrition, micronutrient deficiencies such as Vitamin A and iodine, maternal and child anaemia, quality water supply, sanitation, salt iodisation, access to primary school and learning achievement, and care of the girl child and the adolescent girl remain areas of concern. In most situations girls are worse off than boys.

WE recognise that poverty denies the fulfilment and enjoyment of human rights of children and robs them of the nurturing care that is crucial for their physical, cognitive, and psychological development, and the inculcation of a sound value system to lead healthy and productive lives. Impoverished children are victims of the vicious cycle of poverty, which perpetuates into the next generation. Providing a safe and healthy start to all children is important for breaking the inter-generational cycle of malnutrition and poor health which links an infant, adolescent girl and mother.

WE affirm, therefore, that investing in children is a priority issue and that poverty reduction should begin with children.

WE affirm, once again, that there is no greater investment than laying a stable foundation for every child by ensuring the fulfilment of rights as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). It is our obligation to allocate the required financial resources and take all requisite actions towards the survival and development of all children in South Asia. This covers good health and nutrition of the populations, especially infants, adolescents and women, quality education for girls and boys, improved drinking water and environmental sanitation, and protection of children from all forms of discrimination, exploitation, violence and abuse, trafficking, and hazardous and exploitative forms of child labour. We recognise the urgent need to protect adolescents and young people from HIV/AIDS and children affected by armed conflict.

WE recognise that universal access to quality education is the critical foundation for economic growth. However, the quality of education and learning available to the majority of our children is a matter of great concern. We strongly affirm that South Asia cannot afford disparities in education between boys and girls. Efforts, therefore, must be intensified to achieve gender parity in access and learning.

WE recognise that governments, the corporate sector, civil society, communities, young people, international organisations and media need to work in partnership to ensure adequate, timely and productive investments in fulfilling the rights and achieving the well-being of all children in South Asia, and in strategies towards poverty alleviation.

WE call upon the international community to create a supportive environment for the survival, development and protection of children and promote a non-violent, non-exploitative international order. We urge the donor countries to meet all their commitments under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, implement measures for debt relief, assess and monitor the impact of sanctions on children and ensure humanitarian exemptions that are child focussed to address the possible adverse effects of the sanctions. We also urge donor countries to earmark a higher percentage of their Official Development Assistance for the welfare of children under the 20/20 Initiative. We urge UNICEF and our development partners to reaffirm, in spirit and in actions, the need for structural adjustment with a human face, and trade and tariff arrangements for preferential access to developed country markets.

Noting the situation of children in South Asia we:

- Reaffirm our commitments to accelerate progress to achieve the goals for children agreed at the World Summit for Children in 1990 and the 1996 SAARC Ministerial Conference on Children;
- Support and call for increasingly greater investment in children;
- Urge our development partners to enhance their aid and assistance to support higher investment in children in South Asia;
- Recognise the need to listen to children and actively explore ways of involving them in decisions that affect them at all levels;
- Recognise the importance of partnerships between government, private and corporate sector, civil society organisations, communities, individuals, children, international organisations and media;
- Call for the sharing of national experiences and best practices, and common strategies, which reach families and communities at the grassroots level for fulfilling the rights of children;
- Recognise the importance of regular monitoring and review of progress as part of the accountability for results;
- Propose that this Kathmandu Understanding be brought to the attention of UN General Assembly Special Session and the Third Special Session of the Standing Committee of SAARC which will meet in Colombo 8-9 June 2001, which provides another opportunity for a common position to be taken by our countries to the UN Special Session.

WE pledge to work towards the implementation of this Understanding.

WE adopt this Understanding as the outcome of our Meeting.

WE thank His Majesty's Government of Nepal and UNICEF for organising this South Asia High-level Meeting on Investing in Children and for the hospitality extended to us. We also thank Save the Children for organising the Change Makers meeting and their participation.

South Asia High-level Meeting on Investing in Children, 23 May 2001
Kathmandu, Nepal

The Berlin Commitment for Children of Europe and Central Asia

Berlin Conference — Children in Europe and Central Asia

Germany, 16-18 May 2001

Recognising that progress has been achieved during the past decade in fulfilling the rights of the child throughout Europe and Central Asia, in particular with regard to commitments taken at the 1990 World Summit for Children and the obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, universally ratified by countries of Europe and Central Asia,

Welcoming the important contribution of civil society, non-governmental organisations, the private sector, and regional and international organisations, especially the UN System, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the European Union and the Commonwealth of Independent States, to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Also welcoming that children throughout Europe and Central Asia are increasingly acknowledged as subjects of human rights and that government strategies and legal frameworks, administrative policies and practices progressively respect the right of the child to participate in social life and to partake in the decision-making processes which affect their lives,

Bearing in mind our responsibility towards future generations, which implies, *inter alia*, that any action undertaken today, must not endanger the enjoyment by our children of their human rights,

Recognising that poverty and economic and social disparities, including growing income inequalities especially in the countries in transition, lack of opportunities for leisure and recreation and changes in family structures limit the chances of children of fully developing their personalities, mental and physical abilities, and of growing into a fulfilled adulthood,

Concerned that a growing number of children, particularly in the countries in transition are being deprived of their right to grow up in a healthy, safe and supportive family and community environment which results in growing numbers of children at risk of social exclusion, in significant increases in morbidity, stunting of growth and child development delay as a consequence of poor quality of care as well as in reduced numbers of children participating in basic education programmes and increased rates of juvenile delinquency, accidents and suicides,

Recognising that much still needs to be done to improve the health and social environment for children as well as the quality and relevance of educational programmes, and that low and/or declining public expenditure in the countries in transition caused by overall financial constraints and other factors, continues to affect the provision of social services for children and their access to quality education and health care,

Stressing the need to ensure support, including through giving consideration to restructuring national budgets, international aid flows, and appropriate foreign investments, for the implementation of social reforms and programmes aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of the child in the countries of Europe and Central Asia, particularly in the countries in transition,

Concerned at the rise in tuberculosis, malaria, sexually transmitted diseases, anaemia and iodine deficiency disorders in the countries in transition and noting with concern that HIV/AIDS continues to spread in many countries of Europe and Central Asia, greatly affecting those under 18 years of age and increasingly girls,

Aware of the negative impact of an increasing level of substance abuse, including alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs, on children's and young people's physical and mental health,

Also aware of the increasing numbers of children of Europe and Central Asia at risk of all forms of abuse and violence, such as corporal punishment, sexual and economic exploitation, the worst forms of child labour, trafficking and homelessness,

Concerned that armed conflicts and natural disasters continue to affect and destroy the lives of children in Europe and Central Asia and in this regard stressing the need for a growing awareness of protecting children's rights in conflict situations as well as the importance of protecting children from environmental threats such as chemical contamination and nuclear pollution and of ensuring that children grow up and live in an environment that is conducive to the highest attainable level of health,

Aware of the fact that children belonging to minorities, internally displaced, refugee and migrant children, stateless children, children with disabilities and children infected with HIV and suffering from AIDS are at special risk of being victims of discrimination, and are in need of, and have the right to, special protection, inclusion and participation,

Taking note of the results of regional and sub-regional preparatory conferences and consultations, including the proposals submitted by young people and civil society organisations working for children's rights, and welcoming the Political Message from the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for communication to the Special Session,

Aiming to contribute in collaboration with the UN System, civil society and children themselves to the preparations for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children and to further the development and implementation of actions for children in the next decade.

We, the participants of the Berlin Conference on Children in Europe and Central Asia (16-18 May 2001), affirm our commitment to the following:

1. Take all measures in order to ensure the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratify as soon as possible the two Optional Protocols to this Convention; develop comprehensive national strategies and provide the necessary resources for the implementation of the rights of the child; strengthen and make more effective the existing monitoring mechanisms; reinforce the essential monitoring role of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child by submitting detailed, reliable and timely reports;

2. Enable ratification and full implementation of ILO Convention No. 182 on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, the 1993 Hague Convention on Child Protection and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;

3. Adjust legislation, where appropriate, to ensure its conformity with the norms of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and with the principle of the best interests of the child, strengthen governmental structures for children and independent children's rights commissioners, focal points for children and other mechanisms, while recognising and facilitating the important voluntary initiatives of civil society and the private sector for the benefit of children;

4. Encourage social and economic policies which meet the needs of families and their individual members, with particular attention to the care of children; ensure opportunities for family members to meet their social responsibilities and promote equal partnership between women and men in families, recognising the role of fathers; promote mutual respect, tolerance and co-operation within families and within society; fight against parental abductions and defend the right to personal contacts between parents and children across national boundaries; ensure that wherever possible children have the opportunity to be brought up in family settings

in their own countries as opposed to institutions, and that national strategies for alternative care, including reform or closure of institutions that are not child-friendly be devised, where necessary;

5. Mainstream a gender perspective into all programmes and policies, promote equality between girls and boys, eliminate discrimination against girls in education, consider introducing study programmes on gender education;

6. Make every effort to support and facilitate the rights of children to participate in all relevant decision-making processes, in accordance with their age and maturity, ensure that their views are taken into consideration on all matters that affect them;

7. Make all possible efforts to eradicate poverty and address its negative impact on children, *inter alia* by reducing economic disparities;

8. Implement programmes to protect children from growing health risks, including tuberculosis, malaria, hepatitis and sexually transmitted diseases, in line with the targets set out in WHO Health 21; combat iodine deficiency conditions and anaemia; promote breastfeeding; undertake effective policies to promote mental health and to protect children from alcohol and drug abuse;

9. Pursue effective national and international information and risk-awareness programmes to fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic; adopt effective measures to prevent the direct transmission of HIV/AIDS from mother to child; provide special assistance to children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, and support the psycho-social care of children infected with HIV and suffering from AIDS;

10. Sustain and further increase access to free and compulsory good quality education for all children up to the minimum age for entering into employment while ensuring equal access, opportunities and inclusion for children from both urban and rural areas, children belonging to minorities, indigenous children, refugee and displaced children as well as children with disabilities and other children in need of special protection; empower children to use media and new technologies with competence;

11. Promote life skills education, health and hygiene education, as well as education and participation programmes that highlight peace, justice and tolerance;

12. Protect and remove children from all forms of work which can harm their health, safety and morals; elaborate and implement strategies for the effective elimination of child labour contrary to accepted international standards, bearing in mind that education is a key strategy for combating child labour;

13. Take all necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination and exclusion on the basis of race, language, religion, sex or any other reason; ensure re-integration of marginalised children, such as children living or working in the streets and children living in state institutions, especially those with poor quality of care; focus special attention on protection of and support for children with disabilities, ensure early detection of a child's disability and early intervention, and ensure that children with disabilities are accepted and integrated as equal members of society, with the same entitlements and with unimpeded access to basic health, education and other social services;

14. Take all necessary measures in order to end all forms of violence against children, such as sexual abuse and exploitation and corporal punishment; combat all violence in schools; protect children from violence and pornography in the media and on the Internet; end trafficking of children without criminalising child victims and ensure comprehensive rehabilitation and social re-integration of affected children; implement policies and rehabilitation programmes that take fully into account the rights and special needs of children affected by armed conflict, including refugee children, asylum-seeking and displaced children as well as those deprived of parental care;

15. Ensure that distinct juvenile justice systems are established and/or further developed which focus on rehabilitation and re-integration, using deprivation of liberty only as last resort and for the minimum possible period;

16. Recognise the importance of intergenerational justice, especially with regard to economic and social welfare policy, and environmental sustainability;

17. Protect all children, irrespective of the social and economic conditions they live in from environmental threats; create child-respecting urban and rural environments which enable all children to have access to a range of play and informal learning opportunities both at home and within their local communities;

18. In the overall framework of national development plans and the 20/20 Initiative, ensure substantive budgetary allocation to the maximum extent of available resources, for the benefit of children and their parents and caretakers, to the health and education sectors and other social services, thereby giving priority to the eradication of poverty and social exclusion affecting children; and provide greater transparency in budget allocations and spending on children as a proportion of national budgets;

19. Call for the reaffirmation to strive to fulfil the yet to be attained, internationally agreed target of 0.7 percent of the gross national product of developed countries for overall official development assistance as soon as possible with the aim of increasing the flow of resources for the benefit of children;

20. Take all necessary measures to continue and expand international co-operation for children among countries of Europe and Central Asia and ensure support, including through giving consideration to restructuring national budgets, international aid flows, and appropriate foreign investments, for the implementation of social reforms and programmes aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of the child in the countries of Europe and Central Asia, particularly in the countries in transition.

We have set a challenging and forward-looking agenda for ourselves, recognising that children are citizens in their own rights and that investing in their development is the key to building a peaceful and prosperous Europe and Central Asia. We must now take the legislative, administrative and other actions necessary to realise these aims, and to monitor progress and difficulties.

This will require commitments of time, energy and resources. We commit ourselves to meeting our obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and thus to ensuring that all children in Europe and Central Asia enjoy their rights. We will seek to engage all components of civil society in the challenges this task presents.

We pledge ourselves to this task and will work to create a Europe and Central Asia fit for children.

Beijing Declaration on Commitments for Children in the East Asia and Pacific Region for 2001-2010

Fifth Ministerial Consultation on Shaping the Future of Children

China, 14-16 May 2001

Introduction

1. The delegations of Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Kingdom of Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Republic of Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Union of Myanmar, Republic of Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Republic of Singapore, Solomon Islands, Kingdom of Thailand, Vanuatu and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam met at the 5th Ministerial Consultation in Beijing, China on 14-16 May 2001. We note the significant progress made by the East Asia and Pacific countries in achieving the goals of the World Summit for Children. The challenges and opportunities offered by the 21st century necessitate a new global agenda for children which should build upon the achievements and lessons learned from the last decade.

2. In doing so, we emphasize that today's children are tomorrow's future generation, who must be enabled and equipped to achieve their full human potential and enjoy the full range of human rights in a globalizing world.

3. We urge the Special Session for Children of the United Nations General Assembly, taking place in September 2001 in New York, to take into account our concerns and views and those expressed by the children of this region. We, meanwhile, will continue to contribute to the strengthening of the on-going Global Movement for Children.

4. We are guided by the spirit and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the ILO Convention No. 182 on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, commitments of the review of the World Summit for Social Development and the Millennium Summit, United Nations' core goals on peace, sustainable development and human rights, and the principles of the draft outcome document of the Special Session for Children of the United Nations General Assembly, "*A World Fit for Children*".

Lessons Learned And Progress Review

5. We view with concern that although universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the region has focused attention and commitment to put all children first, policies have to be strengthened in some countries and resources are still insufficient to ensure the comprehensive realization of the rights of the child.

6. We note with great satisfaction that the well-being of children of the region has considerably improved. Efforts to achieve the goals of the World Summit for Children have resulted, inter alia, in dramatic decreases in infant and under-five mortality. This is due largely to high and sustained coverage of immunization and treatment of diarrhoea with oral rehydration therapy. Polio has been eradicated in all but four countries. The majority of families regularly consume iodized salt and the majority of children under five receive two doses of vitamin A each year. Primary school enrollment is almost universal and 86 per cent of adults are literate. There is also increased protection for children.

7. Further achievements were hampered by recent economic crises, natural calamities and, inter alia, the HIV/AIDS pandemic which pose serious threats to the well-being of children in this region.

Unfinished Mission

8. We recognise that there are other goals that have yet to be achieved. Millions of children still do not have access to good quality health, education and other basic services. Infant and maternal mortality remain serious problems. Some countries in the region have malnutrition rates amongst the highest in the world and most countries have seen only modest improvements in the last decade. Although access to clean water and sanitation has improved, about one quarter of the population is still without safe drinking water and one half does not have access to decent sanitation. Primary school drop-out rates remain unacceptably high in some countries, especially among girls. Quality and relevance of basic education remain major challenges. There is a need for greater participation of children in decision making.

9. Despite some notable achievements for improved child protection, the overall number of children requiring special protection has increased. Children in need of special protection include girls in many situations; child labourers; children who are trafficked; victims of other crimes; sexually exploited and stateless children; those who are affected by armed conflict, HIV/AIDS or other major diseases or are in conflict with the law; disabled, poor and street children; those suffering drug and sexual abuse; refugee children; displaced children; children of ethnic minorities and children of migrants.

10. Even within the areas where there has been relative progress, major disparities affecting children remain both between and within countries arising from gender discrimination, socio-economic and ethnic inequities, geographic considerations and proliferating conflict. Despite positive signs of recovery, the impact of the economic crisis continues to have serious implications for children and development.

11. We undertake to sustain the progress already made and to address all these unfinished tasks in this decade.

Challenges and Tasks for 2001-2010

12. We recognize that the challenges and tasks for this decade, for the realization of the rights of the children of the East Asia and Pacific region, should include:

13. Ensuring the active and full participation of children and youth in decisions affecting them;

14. Ensuring continued parallel implementation and monitoring of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, in recognition of the inextricable link between the rights of children and women, through a National Plan of Action;

15. Undertaking specific efforts to ensure peace and reduce poverty in order to guarantee full respect for the rights of all children;

16. Striving to achieve the unmet goals of the World Summit, in particular the goals to reduce maternal mortality and malnutrition and achieve universal access to basic social services, safe water and sanitation. This will entail recognizing the full range of macro-economic, social and environmental factors that affect such problems and the achievement of these and other goals;

17. Reducing disparities, discrimination and inequities by reaching out to all children, in particular those we have yet to reach, those in need of special protection and those in the most disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalized situations;

18. Recognizing the imminent threat of the HIV/AIDS epidemic that is rapidly affecting East Asia and the Pacific, instituting broad-based strategies and programmes, within and across borders, to halt its spread and provide care for its victims;

19. Ensuring the protection of all children, girls and boys, from all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation, strengthening juvenile justice systems and care services for those in need, and helping children to protect themselves, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Principles and Strategies

20. In addressing the above challenges and tasks, we will be guided by the following principles and strategies:

21. Support a global movement for children and a child friendly society through expanded community mobilization, including children and youth, in cooperation with government, civil society and the private sector;

22. Monitor and evaluate achievements in terms of the fulfillment of the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

23. Mainstream children's well-being at the centre of the national agenda, as the most important indicator of national economic and social progress, and allocate sufficient resources for investing in children;

24. Promote and protect the best interests of all children by focusing on critical stages in the life of a child when interventions will have the greatest and most lasting effect. As such we will ensure that all children have:
    a. The best start to life through optimal early childhood care and development, universal birth registration and the right to acquire a nationality;
    b. A basic education of high quality;
    c. The opportunity to develop fully their individual capacities and to participate in and contribute to their societies, especially during adolescence;

25. Encourage the formulation and subsequent implementation of national plans of action for this decade with inputs from children, parents and communities, consistent with the goals and targets of the forthcoming Special Session for Children of the United Nations General Assembly;

26. Strengthen the capacity of national and sub-national institutions to implement integrated national plans of action, within a decentralized system;

27. Expand the strategic alliances and partnerships for children at all levels for the implementation of integrated, multisectoral and multidisciplinary programmes for children;

28. Prevent and minimize the negative impact of man-made and natural disasters through better preparation and strengthened social services including the provision of safety nets for those affected;

29. Strengthen mechanisms for the empowerment of children and adolescents in the consideration of their concerns and in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of appropriate actions to address those concerns;

30. Recognise and support parents and families as the primary caretakers of children and strengthen their capacity to provide the optimum care, nurturing and protection;

31. Strengthen the capacities of social services providers and other care givers for the greater development, protection and care of children;

32. Welcome the sharing of the responsibility to ensure the well-being of children with communities; local governments; social, cultural, religious, business, local people's and children's organizations; and civil society, including the media. Within this, support the empowerment of other organizations to play a greater role in contributing to the best interests of children;

33. Give priority to developing sustainable solutions and systems for improving the situation for children by fully involving children and their communities;

34. Recognise that although globalization has facilitated economic growth and development in many instances, it has also marginalized many poor countries. Consequentially, it is necessary to review trade policies and commitments which may have adverse effects on children and provide social safety nets and national protection mechanisms to protect children and their families from the negative effects of globalization;

35. Harness the opportunities offered by the global information and communication revolution and use, in the most effective way possible, new technologies that can benefit children and women. At the same time protect children from their harmful effects;

36. Ensure the best interest of the child in all programmes and at all levels and sectors by ensuring good governance and transparency;

37. Build upon lessons learned and develop a better understanding of the success factors that improve the efficacy and efficiency of interventions and responses;

38. Develop a strong disaggregated information base to help assess problems, develop solutions, target interventions and monitor and evaluate results. Recognise the value of measurable indicators and targets as benchmarks of success or failure and;

39. Develop indicators and systems, with inputs from children and those concerned, for monitoring the situation and progress of poor and vulnerable groups, down to the lowest administrative level.

Commitments: from Beijing and Beyond

40. We unanimously adopt the Beijing Declaration on Commitments for Children in the East Asia and Pacific Region for 2001-2010.

41. We pledge to work with regional and international bodies such as ASEAN, the Pacific Islands Forum, the Commonwealth, APEC, ASEM, UN agencies, ADB and other international financial institutions, people's organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in realizing our commitments for children, in order to enhance regional and international cooperation for the survival, development, protection and participation of children.

42. We will endeavour to provide practical support to the recommendations of the Regional Children and Young People's Forum-1, held in Jomtien, Thailand in April 2001.

43. We urge all sectors of government and society, including non-government organizations, community based organizations, regional bodies, international agencies, the private sector, academic institutions, the media, parents and children and youth themselves to support this Declaration and work together for children.

44. We pledge to work towards ensuring that our budgetary allocations for basic social services constitute at least twenty per cent of all national, regional and local budgets in the spirit of the 20/20 initiative and appeal to donor countries to strive to fulfill their commitments to provide 0.7 per cent of Gross National Product for Official Development Assistance and to allocate at least 20 per cent thereof to support us and our partners in meeting the commitments for children embodied in this Declaration.

45. We look forward to the forthcoming Special Session for Children of the United Nations General Assembly and pledge our best efforts to ensure the inclusion of the principles of this Declaration in the deliberations and outcomes of the Special Session.

Conclusions:

46. We thank the People's Republic of China and UNICEF for organizing this Fifth Ministerial Consultation at the dawn of this New Decade for Children, and for the excellent meeting arrangements.

47. We pledge to give this Declaration the widest possible publicity. We look forward to meeting at the Sixth Ministerial Consultation to again review the situation and achievements for children.

The Kingston Consensus on Children and Social Policy in the Americas

Fifth Ministerial Meeting on Children and Social Policy in the Americas

Jamaica, 13 October 2000

Preamble

The Ministers and Representatives of Governments participating in the Fifth Ministerial Meeting on Children and Social Policy in the Americas held in Kingston, Jamaica on 9-13 October, 2000 present the results of the deliberations and recommendations endorsed by consensus:

Considering that:

1. These Ministerial Meetings are an effective mechanism for monitoring and evaluation, including the analysis of obstacles as well as sharing experiences on the progress in the implementation of the World Summit for Children goals, as well as for defining policy directives and strategic orientations. As such, they are also an important mechanism for advocacy to keep children and adolescents high on the political and social agenda of the region and of each country. The goal of the Kingston Consensus is to call on States parties to focus on what can be done from the year 2000 to accelerate progress towards the full implementation of World Summit Goals and to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Lima Accord and developing a future agenda.

2. Since 1990, change, planned and unplanned, has proceeded at a fast rate and interpretations of the social processes behind the change are likewise evolving. Social, economic and political conditions affecting children and adolescents and paradigms created to explain them are, at the end of the decade, quite different. The region recognizes the urgent need to resolve key survival issues while it continues the change from a central focus on survival to one oriented towards protection, promotion and the assurance of their rights to participation and integral development.

3. The States of the region have recognized the value of human rights through the ratification of Conventions and the endorsement of plans of action and recommendations emanating from different global and regional conferences. However, the complete fulfillment of human rights continues to be challenged both within the region and within countries.

4. In certain countries, due to the implementation of particular developmental strategies, programmes of structural adjustment , the process of globalisation and unresolved issues regarding inequitable market access, social and cultural variables have been underemphasized thus deepening inequities and exclusion in favour of economic growth. Consequently, social investment, although increasing, remains insufficient. Similarly, the reduction of Official Development Assistance has negatively impacted on economic and social development in some countries of the region.

5. Reaffirm Paragraph 10 of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action which identifies the importance of the Right to development, affirms the human person as the central subject of development and emphasizes the connection to the maximum survival and development of the child.

6. Children and adolescents are often excluded from participating in economic, political, and social processes, which thereby hinders their own development and deprives society of their insights, commitment, and energy.

7. The situation of children, adolescents and women of the region has improved in remarkable ways since 1990, as indicated by, among others, the following accomplishments:

A. The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women have been ratified by the overwhelming majority of countries in the Americas;

B. Infant and under five mortality rates have been reduced by over 20% in most countries;

C. Vaccination rates are over 90% for the major immunizable diseases.

D. Poliomyelitis has been eradicated and mortality due to measles has been significantly reduced.

E. Net primary school enrolment is over 90%.

F. Sanitation coverage has increased considerably, particularly in rural areas.

G. All countries have made progress in salt iodization and most have improved the fortification of foods with iron and vitamin A.

H. Improvements in protein and caloric intake has resulted in a marked reduction in childhood malnutrition.

I. Some progress was made towards gender equity and equality for women. However, their political and economic participation remains too low.

8. In spite of such progress, all countries in the Americas are concerned with the following issues:

(a) the unmet goals of the World Summit for Children;
(b) sustaining advances that were made;
(c) reducing inequalities; and
(d) addressing emerging challenges, inter alia

(I) absence of indicators to assess the fulfillment of child rights;
(II) lack of access to quality health services and health information;
(III) child exploitation in all forms; and
(IV) the need to integrate children in decision making processes.

9. Children and adolescents face barriers to their full participation, protection, development and survival, and the full enjoyment of their rights. These barriers contravene the principle of non-discrimination, which calls for ensuring rights irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, color, sex, age, language, culture, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status. Further, that the progress that has been made can be stalled or reversed by armed conflicts, natural and other disasters, new and resurgent diseases, unequal income and power distribution and other threats.

10. In spite of significant progress in implementing social policies and programs in favour of children and adolescents, there are still weaknesses in areas related to support for families, community organizations, the administration of juvenile justice, health and family life education, cultural expressions, and recreation, among others. Further that weaknesses in these policies, if not corrected, increase the risk for millions of children and adolescents to suffer exclusion, violence, impoverishment and despair.

Are Determined To:

1. Make every necessary effort so that children and adolescents have opportunities to fully develop their physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social capacities and to guarantee and promote respect for human rights.

2. Develop and implement integrated policies and actions aimed at breaking the inter-generational cycles of poverty, and eradicating exclusion, discrimination and lack of respect for human rights.

3. Promote actions and mechanisms to maximize the participation of children and adolescents in decision-making in all matters that directly and indirectly affect them.

4. Support the creation of mechanisms that facilitate the participation of civil society in all matters that affect children and adolescents.

5. Promote actions to eliminate discrimination and exclusion of ethnic groups, religious groups, linguistic or other minorities or indigenous peoples, and to strengthen their diverse cultural identities.

6. Ensure the protection of children and adolescents from all forms of abuse, including injury, violence, neglect, sexual abuse, commercial exploitation, sale and traffic, forced labour, and from forced or compulsory recruitment for armed conflicts. Further, to ensure such protection through combined strategies of support, including institutional and legal reform, information dissemination, rights awareness promotion, formation of community support groups and family life education, with special emphasis on the role of the father.

7. Ensure the protection of children and adolescents from all forms of discrimination and harm, and support policies, plans and programmes to advance equality and respect for them.

8. Ensure that every child and adolescent in conflict with the law has due process and is treated in accordance with the relevant principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international and national legal instruments and standards for child protection. Further, to take such steps as are needed to provide training in human rights and in the administration of justice for children and adolescents, to all those involved with children and adolescents in conflict with the law.

9. Ensure the rights of children and adolescents with different abilities, including those with disabilities, to appropriate services, attention, and education adequate to their capacities. Similarly, to create mechanisms to support their families and/or caregivers and their full integration into the society.

10. Encourage the partnership between Governments and civil society to assist children and adolescents to develop values that promote human rights and equality, peace, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equitable gender relations.

11. Continue progress towards universal access to comprehensive health services, including effective prevention, early intervention, treatment and rehabilitation strategies. Also, increase knowledge of adolescents and children about sexual and reproductive health, with special emphasis on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections.

12. Progress toward universal high quality early childhood and primary education in an environment that promotes the full development of children and adolescents, instills respect for human rights, and prepares them for responsible life in society.

13. Increase resources, based on availability, for comprehensive early childhood care and development to ensure better learning outcomes, reduce inequalities, and ensure fulfillment of human rights. Cooperate with civil society and families to support proper health, nutrition, and education.

14. Develop and implement programmes geared to creating opportunities for children, adolescents, and adults who have not benefited from formal education or have dropped out of school. Special attention should be given to disadvantaged children and adolescents, such as those with disabilities, those living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, adolescent mothers, and those in conflict with the law.

15. Urge all countries to consider signing, ratifying and implementing all international legal instruments relating to the rights of children, in particular, (I) the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict; and (II) the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Pornography and Child Prostitution, ILO Convention 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, ILO Convention 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-Country Adoption. These legal instruments represent major advances in the international effort to strengthen and enforce legal norms and national plans of action for the protection of the most vulnerable children.

16. Call on donor and creditor countries and international financial institutions to consider accelerating the adoption of concrete ways to relieve the public debt burden. This should permit the adoption of actions to benefit children and adolescents.

17. Reaffirm the implementation of the 20/20 initiative, addressed at Copenhagen +5 in July 2000, based on mutual agreement and commitment between the donor and recipient countries to ensure universal access to social services.

18. Increase horizontal technical cooperation between countries in order to share positive experiences and strategies which can help to accelerate the processes necessary for achieving the agreed goals.

19. Institute and consolidate harmonized national and regional information systems which provide disaggregated data on the situation of children and adolescents in order to enhance decision-making, define and evaluate policies, and inform the populace.

20. Encourage Governments to work towards the full implementation of the commitments made at the World Conference on Human Rights 1993, the International Conference on Population and Development 1994, and ICPD +5, the World Summit on Social Development 1995 and WSSD+5, The Fourth World Conference on Women 1995 and Beijing+5, World Conference on Education 1990 and World Education Forum 2000.

21. Recognize that equitable sustainable human development could be facilitated if the rights and well-being of children are promoted and protected. The individual development of children is intrinsically connected to the development of the human society, thus shaping the future of the world.

22. Respond to the unexpected challenges which will arise, that this Consensus does not address. In all such cases, decisions will be based on the principles of non-discrimination, best interests of the child, maximum survival and development, and participation of children and adolescents.

Final considerations:

1. Request that the Host of the Fifth Ministerial Meeting on Children and Social Policy submit the Kingston Consensus as a regional contribution to the Preparatory Committee for the UN Special Session on Children through its Secretariat, and to the Preparatory Committee of the Third Summit of the Americas in 2001.

2. Express gratitude to the Countries of the Caribbean, and in particular to the Government of Jamaica, for hosting this meeting, and especially to the Right Honourable P. J. Patterson, Prime Minister of Jamaica.

3. Express their thanks to the Government of Peru as the Pro- Tempore Secretariat for its invaluable contributions to the preparatory process for the Fifth Ministerial Meeting.

4. Express their gratitude to UNICEF, all other UN Agencies, organizations of the Inter-American System and International Cooperation agencies, and other members of the Interagency Coordinating Committee, for their facilitation of the Fifth Ministerial Meeting.